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4.5 cm gripper

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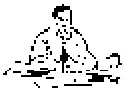
Note from the Publisher



Dear fellow Birdwatchers

Understanding the dynamics of co-evolution in birds and plants

In this issue we have published an article on the avifaunal interaction with plants by Vijay and Bhutia of the Zoological Survey of India. Birds are evidently involved in many relationships with their life-sustaining intermediaries, competitors, predators, prey, and parasites. Many fruit-eating birds, especially in tropical rain forests have co-evolved with the plants whose fruits they eat. The birds get nourishment, and in the process the plants get their digestion-resistant seeds dispersed by regurgitation or along with the birds' droppings. Many characteristics of the plants have evolved to facilitate dispersal and the birds have responded concomitantly to those changes in behaviour and diet .

Such co-evolutions could lead to mutualism in plant-animal systems, and occasionally one or both of two mutualistic species might develop a considerable degree of dependence on the other member. Such a plant-animal mutualism and co-evolution between Dodo (*Raphus cuculatus)* and *Calvaria* tree *(Calvaria major)*, has lead to the near elimination of the latter. The dodo's digestive system comprised a well-developed gizzard with large stones: for crushing solid food items. But sadly, the dodo was hunted to extinction by Portuguese invaders in Mauritius some 300 years ago and this twisted the fate of *calvaria* also. Only thirteen male *calvaria* trees, all of which are over three centuries old, remain on the island. There has been virtually no evidence of natural germination of this plant, after the extinction of the dodo, which apparently is a sequential coincidence for the two mutualistic species. Researchers hypothesized that in response to excessive consumption of its fruits by dodos, *calvaria* had evolved an extremely thick endocarp as a protection for its seeds. These specialized, thick-walled pits could withstand ingestion by dodos, but the seeds within were unable to germinate without first being abraded and scarified in the gizzard of a dodo.

A bird the size of a dodo would almost certainly have passed an object of this size or larger through its intestinal tract. Perhaps the most convincing evidence that seed-coat dormancy in *calvaria* can only be overcome naturally by passage through a bird's digestive tract came from experiments in which Dr. Stanley Temple, an American avian ecologist and Professor of Environmental Studies at the University of Wisconsin–Madison, force-fed single, fresh *calvaria* pits to turkeys. Some of these pits were retained in the Turkey's digestive tract for as long as 6 days, and seven of 17 ingested pits were eventually crushed by the bird's gizzard. The remaining ten pits were either regurgitated or passed in the feces after being reduced in size through abrasion in the gizzard. Dr. Stanley planted the ten recovered seeds under nursery conditions, and three subsequently germinated. These may well have been the first *calvaria seeds* to germinate in more than 300 years, which according to Dr. Stanley provided empirical support for the hypothesis that the fruits of *calvaria* had become highly specialized through co-evolution with the dodo. After the dodo became extinct, no other animal on Mauritius was capable of ingesting the large pits. As a result, *calvaria* has been unable to reproduce for 300 years and nearly became extinct.

Dr. Salim Ali is typically credited with preliminary research relating to the co-evolution of certain birds and plants in India. He had published several papers between 1931 and 1977, highlighting the role of sunbirds and flowerpeckers (mistletoe birds), in the propagation and distribution of *Loranthus longiflorus* (mistletoe plant). He had succinctly titled his first paper "Flower-birds and Bird-Flowers in India" and advanced the philosophy of evolution of dependence of bird propagation on plant occurrence and vice versa.

Sunbirds and flowerpeckers swallow the ripe berries wholly and the sticky slimy seeds are excreted on to another branch of the same host tree or of a neighboring one where they adhere and sprout within a few days. The flowerpecker performs a number of twisting movements when defecating, wiping the seeds on to the branch, rather than dropping them to the ground. It is inseparable from *Loranthus* whose flowers it probes into for nectar and cross-fertilises, and whose seed it disperses. Studies have confirmed that, a high abundance of mistletoe in a forest means that more kinds and numbers of birds inhabit that forest. The mistletoe plant and the mistletoe bird thus show complementary adaptations for mutual benefit, the plant attaining efficient dispersal and the bird ensuring a continuing food supply.

While we are on the subject, conservationists are bemoaning that mistletoe, the favorite plant associated with Pagan and Christian rituals, could vanish from the halls and doorways within 20 years. In the past 60 years the traditional orchards have dramatically declined, where mistletoe thrives. This may sequentially lead to the parasite plant disappearing and many that survive are not being tended, hastening the death of the trees and the hemi-parasitic plant.

If the co-evolution theory is indeed accurate, then the birds that have co-evolved with the mistletoe plant will probably suffer the same fate as that of the mutualistic duo; *calvaria* and *dodo*!

Thanking you,
Yours in Bird Conservation
S. Sridhar, Publisher, NLBW

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Avifauna of Kuldiha Wildlife Sanctuary, Orissa, India

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Introduction

The definition of a wildlife sanctuary is: "Large area of unmodified or slightly modified land or sea, retaining its natural character and influence, without permanent or significant habitation, which is protected and managed so as to preserve its natural condition" (Parr, 2006).

The biodiversity of State of Orissa reflects constituents from four Biogeographic provinces namely Eastern plateau, Chhotnagpur plateau, the lower gangetic plain and the Eastern coast (Wildlife scenario in Orissa, 2008).The region comes under Eastern Ghat and acts as a connecting link between Himalaya and Western part of India. Orissa is rich in avifaunal diversity, but very few studies have been carried out so far. Dev (1986) reported 223 species inside Similipal Biosphere Reserve. Similarly Gopi & Pandav (2007) studied the diversity of birds in Bhitarkanika mangroves. Chilika - the Ramasar site is also located in Orissa which is well known for migratory birds. The state comprises 2 National parks and 18 sanctuaries. Between them Kuldiha is one and it comes under Biogeographic region of Deccan peninsular which is of tremendous genetic and ecological importance with variety of flora and fauna. Interestingly Kuldiha Wildlife Sanctuary is connected to Similipal Biosphere Reserve of Mayurbhanj district through Sukhpada hills and Nato hills in the west. But, there is no exclusive data available on avifaunal diversity of this sanctuary. Therefore the study was designed to get baseline data on avifaunal diversity of the sanctuary and also to collect the information about the conservation needs.

Study area

The Kuldiha WLS is located in the Nilgiri Civil Sub Division of Balasore (Wildlife) division bordering to Mayurbhanj District and the area lies between 21° -20′ to 21° -30′ N and 86° -30′ to 86° -45′ E in Orissa state of eastern part of India. The Sanctuary encompasses 272.75 sq km comprising mainly five ranges i.e. Nilgiri, Kuldiha, Chandipur, Sergarh and Purunapani. It is a hilly terrain, which was declared as Sanctuary on 4th January, 1984.The range of altitude varies from 169 to 682 mtrs. The river Sono, a tributary of Budhabalanga, flows in the western and northern portion of the forest with several seasonal streams. The area falls under tropical deciduous forest biome and it includes semi evergreen forest, peninsular (coastal) sal forest, moist mixed deciduous forest (Champion and Seth, 1968).The climate is tropical with 3 prominent seasons which are summer, monsoon and winter. Summer is the dominant season with high temperature from March to mid July. The maximum temperature at times touches beyond 42^{0}C.

Materials and Methods

The data on avifaunal diversity inside the sanctuary was systematically gathered from October 2008 to April 2010, as part of biodiversity studies of the sanctuary. For the survey of avifauna mainly line transect method (Buckland et al., 1993) was used with visual encounter method. Transects were randomly selected and birds from both sides were recorded. In addition to these methods vocal individuality method (Saunders and Wooler, 1988) was also used to identify some bird species, because many species of birds are detected by their calls and songs (e.g. Rappole et.al. 1993). Birds were identified by sight as well as sound. Direct observations were made periodically using of 10x50 DPSI Olympus binoculars. Spot identification was done using field guide (Ali & Ripley 1983; Ali 1999; Grimmett et al, 1999). The checklist was prepared using the standard common and scientific names of the birds of the Indian subcontinent by Manakadan and Pittie (2004). Information regarding the birds with confirmed identity alone are presented in this paper.

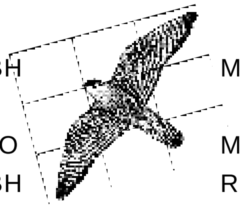
Results and Discussion

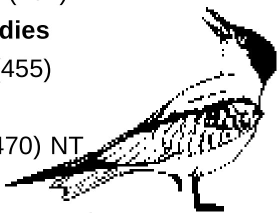
The list of avifauna sighted from the Kuldiha Wildlife Sanctuary during October 2008 to April 2010 is presented in Table 1. A total of 142 species of birds of 52 families were reported from the sanctuary. Out of 141 species 85.9% (122) were resident forms and 14.1% (20) migrants. Among the birds Black-bellied Tern (*Sterna acuticauda*) is considered nearly threatened according to the Red Data Book of Birdlife International (2006). No avifaunal survey work had previously been conducted in this Sanctuary. Due to the lack of published information on birds in this region, the main aim of this research was to investigate the diversity of birds in the study area. This checklist is totally new for the area as earlier reports are unavailable. Analysis of encounter rates revealed the fact that Black Drongo, Black-hooded Oriole, Black-naped Oriole, Plum-headed Parakeet, Rose-ringed Parakeet, Alexandrine Parakeet, Rufous Treepie, Crimson-breasted Barbet, Large-tailed Nightjhar, Red-vented Bulbul, Spotted Dove are the main birds of the sanctuary with high encounter rates. From the present survey it is also clear that Kuldiha is a good habitat for raptors and a total number of 15 (10.6%) species of raptors were recorded indicating the richness of the sanctuary. Indian Grey Hornbill was also observed in the sanctuary.

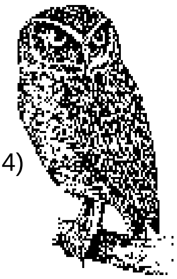
The waterfowl numbers are very less inside the sanctuary due to the absence of perennial water sources. Artificial water reservoirs should be constructed to fill up the shortage of water. Forest fire is another problem which creates major damage to the sanctuary . Fire watch tower is essential inside the sanctuary to monitor the forest fire and to minimize the damage. Due to the proximity of dry forest habitats to human habitation and their inclusion in the buffer zone of the reserves, these habitats are severely threatened by anthropogenic activities. Kuldiha faces high grazing pressure by the livestock of fringe villages and shortage of grasslands. Other threats to the sanctuary are timber and other forest products collection, poaching, trapping and poisoning of wild animals. An awareness programme is essential for students, leaders, villagers, and forest staff to change the attitude of people towards conservation. Kuldiha is a rich biodiversity area but the high anthropogenic pressure is decreasing the richness day by day. The sanctuary needs better management practices which are necessary to reduce the pressure on the forest. A long term study is needed to explore this undocumented area.

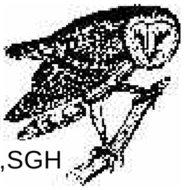
Table 1: Checklist of the avifauna of Kuldiha Wildlife Sanctuary, Orissa

Sl.no	Common name	Family/Subfamily/Scientific name	Site record	Status
	Grebes	**Podicipedidae**		
1	Little Grebe(5)	*Tachybaptus ruficollis*(Pallas,1764)	KLD	R
	Cormorants/Shags	**Phalacrocoracidae**		
2	Little cormorant (28)	*Phalacrocorax niger* (Vieillot,1817)	Several places	R
3	Indian Shag (27)	*Phalacrocorax fuscicollis* (Stephens,1826)	PU	R
	Herons, Egrets & Bitterns	**Ardeidae**		
4	Little Egret (49)	*Egretta garzetta*(Linnaeus,1766)	CH	R
5	Large Egret(45-46)	*Casmerodius albus*(Linnaeus,1758)	JO	R
6	Median Egret (47,48)	*Mesophoyx intermedia*(Wagler,1829)	Several places	R
7	Cattle Egret (44)	*Bubulcus ibis* (Linnaeus,1758)	Several places	R
8	Indian Pond Heron (42-42a)	*Ardeola grayii*(Sykes,1832)	Several places	R
9	Chestnut Bittern (56)	*Ixobrychus cinnamomeus* (Gmelin,1789)	JO	R
	Storks	**Ciconiidae**		
10	Asian Openbill-Stork (61)	*Anastomus oscitans* (Boddaert,1783)	CH,NIL	R
	Hawks, Eagles, Buzzards, Old world Vultures, Kites, Harriers	**Accipitridae**		
11	Oriental Honey-Buzzard (129-130)	*Pernis ptilorhynchus*(Temminck,1821)	DH	R
12	Black-shouldered Kite (124)	*Elanus caeruleus*(Desfontaines,1789)	DH,KLD	R
13	Black Kite (132-134)	*Milvus migrans* (Boddaert,1783)	Several places	R
14	Short-toed Snake Eagle (195)	*Circaetus gallicus* (Gmelin,1788)	BH	R
15	Crested Serpent Eagle (196-200)	*Spilornis cheela* (Latham,1790)	BH,DH,PLR	R
16	Pallied Harrier (190)	*Circus macrourus* (S.G.Gmelin,1770)	JO	M
17	Shikra (137-140)	*Accipiter badius* (Gmelin,1788)	Several places	R
18	White-eyed Buzzard (157)	*Butastur teesa* (Franklin,1832)	KLD	R
	Osprey	**Pandionidae**		
19	Osprey (203)	*Pandion haliaetus* (Linnaeus,1758)	BH	M
	Falcons	**Falconidae**		
20	Common Kestrel (222-224)	*Falco tinnunculus* (Linnaeus, 1758)	JO	M
21	Peregrine Falcon (209-211)	*Falco peregrinus* (Tunstall, 1771)	BH	R
	Pheasants, Partridges, Quails	**Phasianidae**		
22	Jungle Bush –Quail (255-258)	*Perdicula asiatica* (Latham,1790)	JO	R
23	Red Junglefowl (299-300)	*Gallus gallus* (Linnaeus,1758)	KLD,JO,PU	R
24	Indian Peafowl (311)	*Pavo cristatus* Linnaeus,1758	KLD	R
	Rails, Crakes, Moorhens, Coots	**Rallidae**		
25	White-breasted Waterhen (343-345)	*Amaurornis phoenicurus* (Pennant,1769)	PU	R
26	Common Moorhen (347-347a)	*Gallinula chloropus* (Linnaeus,1758)	PU	R









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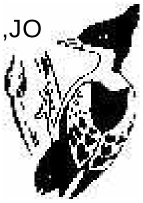
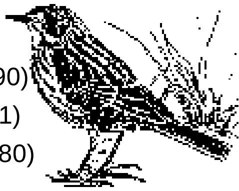
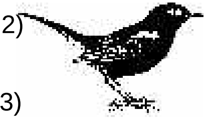
	Jacanas	**Jacanidae**		
27	Pheasant-tailed Jacana (358)	*Hydrophasianus chirurgus* (Scopoli,1786)	PU	R
28	Bronze-winged Jacana (359)	*Metopidius indicus* (Latham,1790)	KLD	R
	Plovers, Dotterels, Lapwings	**Charadridae**		
29	Little ringed Plover (379-380)	*Charadrius dubius* (Scopoli, 1786)	JO	R
30	Red-wattled Lapwing (366-368)	*Vanellus indicus* (Boddaert,1783)	PLR	R
	Sandpipers, Stints, Snipes,Godwits & Curlews	**Scolopacidae**		
31	Common Sandpiper (401)	*Actitis hypoleucos* (Linnaeus, 1758)	PU	M
	Gulls,Terns & Noddies	**Laridae**		
32	Black-headed Gull (455)	*Larus ridibundus* (Linnaeus, 1766)	CH	M
33	River Tern (463)	*Sterna aurantia* (J.E.Gray,1831)	CH	R
34	Black-bellied Tern (470) NT	*Sterna acuticauda* (J.E.Gray,1831)	CH	R
	Pigeons & Doves	**Columbidae**		
35	Blue Rock Pigeon (516-517)	*Columba livia* (Gmelin,1789)	JO	R
36	European Turtle Dove(529)	*Streptopelia turtur* (Linnaeus,1758)	KLD,JO	R
37	Oriental Turtle-Dove (530-533)	*Streptopelia orientalis* (Latham,1790)	KLD,PLR,SGH	R
38	Spotted Dove (537-540)	*Streptopelia chinensis* (Scopoli,1786)	Several places	R
39	Eurasian Collared-Dove (534)	*Streptopelia decaocto* (Frivaldszky,1838)	JO,PU	R
40	Emerald Dove (542-544a)	*Chalcophaps indica* (Linnaeus,178)	NIL,DH	
	Parakeets & Hanging-Parrots	**Psittacidae**		
41	Alexandrine Parakeet (545-548)	*Psittacula eupatria* (Linnaeus,1766)	KLD,JO	R
42	Rose-ringed Parakeet (549-550)	*Psittacula krameri* (Scopoli,1769)	Several places	R
43	Plum headed Parakeet (557-558)	*Psittacula cyanocephala* (Linnaeus,1766)	Several places	R
	Cuckoos, Malkohas & Coucals	**Cuculidae**		
44	Pied Crested Cuckoo (570-571)	*Clamator jacobinus* (Boddaert,1783)	BH	M
45	Brainfever Bird (573-574)	*Hierococcyx varius* (Vahl, 1797)	DH,KLD	
46	Indian Cuckoo (576)	*Cuculus micropterus* Gould,1838	PLR	R
47	Asian Koel (590-592)	*Eudynamys scolopacea* (Linnaeus,1758)	PLR,JO	R
48	Sirkeer Malkoha (596-598)	*Phaenicophaeus leschenaultii* (Lesson,1830)	BH	R
49	Greater Coucal (600-602)	*Centropus sinensis* (Stephens,1815)	PLR,KLD,PU	R
	Barn Owls	**Tytonidae**		
50	Barn Owl (606-607)	*Tyto alba* (Scopoli,1769)	JO	R
	Owls	**Strigidae**		
51	Collared Scops-Owl (619-624)	*Otus bakkamoena* (Pennant, 1769)	BH	R
52	Jungle Owlet (636-637)	*Glaucidium radiatum* (Tickell,1833)	JO,SGH	R
53	Spotted Owlet (650-652)	*Athene brama* (Temminck,1821)	NIL	R
	Nightjars	**Caprimulgidae**		
54	Indian Jungle Nightjar (670-672a)	*Caprimulgus indicus* (Latham,1790)	JO,KLD	R
55	Large-tailed Nightjar (675, 678-679)	*Caprimulgus macrurus* (Horsfield, 1821)	JO	R
56	Common Indian Nightjar (680-681)	*Caprimulgus asiaticus* (Latham1790)	JO	R
	Swifts	**Apodidae**		
57	Asian Palm-Swift (707-708)	*Cypsiurus balasiensis* (J.E.Gray,1829)	BH	R
58	House Swift (702-706)	*Apus affinis* (J.E.Gray,1830)	SGH,NIL	R
	Tree-Swifts	**Hemiprocnidae**		
59	Crested Tree-Swift (709)	*Hemiprocne coronata* (Tickell,1833)	DH	R

Sl.no	Common name	Family/Subfamily/Scientific name	Site record	Status
	Kingfishers	**Alcedinidae**		
60	Small Blue Kingfisher (722-724)	*Alcedo atthis* (Linnaeus,1758)	JO,PU	R
61	White Breasted Kingfisher (735-738)	*Halcyon smyrnensis* (Linnaeus,1758)	PLR,JO,PU	R
	Bee-eaters	**Meropidae**		
62	Small Bee-eater (749-752)	*Merops orientalis* (Latham,1801)	KLD	R
63	Blue-tailed Bee-eater (748)	*Merops philippinus* (Linnaeus,1766)	JO,KLD	M
	Rollers	**Coraciidae**		
64	Indian Roller (755-757)	*Coracias benghalensis* (Linnaeus,1758)	PLR,KLD,NIL	R
	Hoopoes	**Upupidae**		
65	Common Hoopoe (763-766)	*Upupa epops* (Linnaeus,1758)	SGH,NIL,KLD	R
	Hornbills	**Bucerotidae**		
66	Indian Grey Hornbill (767)	*Ocyceros birostris* (Scopoli,1786)	BH	R
	Barbets	**Capitonidae**		
67	Brown-headed Barbet (780-782)	*Megalaima zeylanica* (Gmelin,1788)	BH,DH,JO	R
68	Coppersmith Barbet (792)	*Megalaima haemacephala* (P.L.S. Muller,1776)	BH	R
	Woodpeckers	**Picidae**		
69	Brown-capped Pygmy Woodpecker (851-54)	*Dendrocopos nanus* (Vigors,1832)	JO	R
70	Lesser Golden-backed Woodpecker (818-23)	*Dinopium benghalense* (Linnaeus,1758)	NIL,JO	R
71	Greater Golden-backed Woodpecker (860-63)	*Chrysocolaptes lucidus* (Scopoli,1786)	NIL,JO,KLD	R
	Larks	**Alaudidae**		
72	Ashy-crowned Sparrow-Lark (878)	*Eremopterix grisea* (Scopoli,1786)	PU	R
73	Eastern Skylark (904-909)	*Alauda gulgula* (Franklin,1831)	PU,DH	M
	Wagtails & Pipits	**Motacillidae**		
74	Forest Wagtail (1874)	*Dendronanthus indicus* (Gmelin,1789)	KLD	M
75	White Wagtail (1885-1890)	*Motacilla alba* (Linnaeus,1758)	KLD,NIL	M
76	Large Pied Wagtail (1891)	*Motacilla maderaspatensis* (Gmelin,1789)	SGH,PU	R
77	Yellow Wagtail (1875-1880)	*Motacilla flava* (Linnaeus,1758)	JO	M
78	Grey Wagtail (1884)	*Motacilla cinerea* (Tunstall,1771)	KLD	M
79	Paddyfield Pipit (1858-1860)	*Anthus rufulus* (Vieillot,1818)	PLR,KLD	R
80	Eurasian Tree Pipit (1854-1855)	*Anthus trivialis* (Linnaeus,1758)	JO	M
	Cuckoo-Shrikes, FlycatcherShrikes, Trillers, Minivets, Woodshrikes	**Campephagidae**		
81	Large Cuckoo-Shrike (1072-1075)	*Coracina macei* (Lesson,1830)	BH	R
82	Black-headed Cuckoo-Shrike (1078-1079)	*Coracina melanoptera* (Ruppell,1839)	BH,DH,JO	R
83	Rosy Minivet (1089)	*Pericrocotus roseus* (Vieillot,1818)	JO	R
84	Small Minivet (1090-1095)	*Pericrocotus cinnamomeus* (Linnaeus,1766)	NIL	R
85	Scarlet Minivet (1080-1083)	*Pericrocotus flammeus* (Forster,1781)	PLR	R
86	Large Woodshrike (1067-1068)	*Tephrodornis gularis* (Raffles,1822)	BH	R
87	Common Woodshrike (1069-1071)	*Tephrodornis pondicerianus* (Gmelin,1789)	KLD	R
	Bulbuls & Finchbills	**Pycnonotidae**		
88	Red-whiskered Bulbul (1118-1122)	*Pycnonotus jocosus* (Linnaeus,1758)	KLD,JO,PU	R
89	Red-vented Bulbul (1126-1132)	*Pycnonotus cafer* (Linnaeus,1766)	Several places	R
	Ioras, Chloropsis/Leafbird,Fairy-Bluebird	**Irenidae**		
90	Common Iora (1097-1101)	*Aegithina tiphia* (Linnaeus,1758)	JO	R
	Shrikes	**Laniidae**		
91	Brown Shrike (949-950a)	*Lanius cristatus* (Linnaeus,1758)	SGH,PLR,PU	M

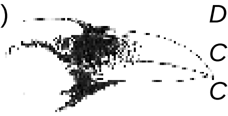




Sl.no	Common name	Family/Subfamily/Scientific name	Site record	Status
92	Bay-backed Shrike (939-940)	*Lanius vittatus* (Valenciennes,1826)	KLD	R
93	Rufous-backed Shrike (946-948)	*Lanius schach* (Linnaeus,1758)	BH	M
	Thrushes, Shortwings, Robins, Forktails, Wheaters	**Turdinae**		
94	Blue Rock-Thrush (1725-1726)	*Monticola solitaries* (Linnaeus,1758)	DH,KLD	M
95	Orange-headed Thrush (1733-1736)	*Zoothera citrina* (Latham,1790)	JO	R
96	Oriental Magpie- Robin(1661-1664)	*Copsychus saularis* (Linnaeus,1758)	Several places	R
97	White-rumped Shama (1665-1668)	*Copsychus malabaricus* (Scopoli,1786)	JO,NIL	R
98	Black Redstart (1671-1672)	*Phoenicurus ochruros* (Gmelin, 1774)	JO	M
99	Indian Robin (1717-1721)	*Saxicoloides fulicata* (Linnaeus,1776)	NIL,JO,SGH	R
100	Pied Bushchat (1700-1703)	*Saxicola caprata* (Linnaeus,1766)	Several places	R
	Babblers, Laughingthrushes, Babaxes, Barwings, Yuhinas	**Timaliinae**		
101	Common Babbler (1253-1254)	*Turdoides caudatus* (Dumont,1823)	JO,DH	R
102	Jungle Babbler (1261-1265)	*Turdoides striatus* (Dumont,1823)	Several places	R
	Goldcrest, Prinias, Tesias,Warblers	**Sylviinae**		
103	Streaked Fantail-Warbler(1498-1500a)	*Cisticola juncidis* (Rafinesque, 1810)	PU,DH	R
104	Franklin‘s Prinia (1502-1505)	*Prinia hodgsonii* (Byth,1844)	BH,JO	R
105	Ashy Prinia (1515-1518)	*Prinia socialis* (Sykes,1832)	BH	R
106	Plain Prinia (1510-1514)	*Prinia inornata* (Sykes,1832)	PU	R
107	Common Tailorbird (1535-1539)	*Orthotomus sutorius* (Pennant,1769)	Several places	R
108	Common Chiffchaff (1574-1575)	*Phylloscopus fuscatus* (Blyth,1842)	PU,KLD,NIL	M
109	Red-throated Flycatcher (1411-1412)	*Ficedula parva* (Bechstein,1792)	BH	M
110	Tickell's Blue-Flycatcher (1442-1430)	*Cyornis tickelliae* (Blyth,1843)	BH,JO	R
	Flycatchers	**Muscicapinae**		
111	Asian Brown Flycatcher (1407)	*Muscicapa dauurica* (Pallas, 1811)	KLD	M
	Monarch-Flycatchers & Paradise-Flycatchers	**Monarchinae**		
112	Black –naped Monarch-Flycatcher (1465-69)	*Hypothymis azurea* (Boddaert,1783)	DH	R
	Fantail-Flycatchers	**Rhipidurinae**		
113	White-throated Fantail- Flycatcher (1454-59)	*Rhipidura albicollis* (Vieillot,1818)	KLD,CH,NIL	R
114	White-browed Fantail-Flycatcher (1451-53)	*Rhipidura aureola* (Lesson,1830)	CH,JO	R
	Tits	**Paridae**		
115	Great tit (1790-1797)	*Parus major* (Linnaeus,1758)	KLD,SGH	R
116	Black-lored Yellow Tit (1809-1811)	*Parus xanthogenys* (Vigors ,1831)	JO	R
	Nuthatches & Wallcreeper	**Sittidae**		
117	Chestnut-bellied Nuthatch (1827-1831)	*Sitta castanea* (Lesson,1830)	JO,PU	R
	Flowerpeckers	**Dicaeidae**		
118	Thick-billed Flowerpecker (1892-1894)	*Dicaeum agile* (Tickell,1833)	SGH	R
	Sunbirds & Spiderhunters	**Nectariniidae**		
119	Purple-rumped Sunbird (1907-1908)	*Nectarinia zeylonica* (Linnaeus,1766)	NIL,BH	R
120	Purple Sunbird (1916-1918)	*Nectarinia asiatica* (Latham,1790)	JO,PLR	R
	White-eyes	**Zosteropidae**		
121	Oriental White-eye (1933-1936)	*Zosterops palpebrosus* (Temminck,1824)	PLR,PU	R
	Munias (Estrildid Finches)	**Estrildidae**		
122	Red Munia (1964)	*Amandava amandava* (Linnaeus,1758)	JO	R
123	White-throated Munia (1966)	*Lonchura malabarica* (Linnaeus,1758)	JO,PU	R
124	Spotted Munia (1974-1975)	*Lonchura punctulata* (Linnaeus,1758)	KLD	R



Sl.no	Common name	Family/Subfamily/Scientific name	Site record	Status
125	Black-headed Munia (1976-1978)	*Lonchura malacca* (Linnaeus,1766)	PLR,PU	R
	Sparrows & Snowfinches	**Passerinae**		
126	House Sparrow (1938-1939a)	*Passer domesticus* (Linnaeus,1758)	PLR,KLD,CH	R
	Weavers	**Ploceinae**		
127	Baya Weaver (1957-1959)	*Ploceus philippinus* (Linnaeus,1766)	BH	R
	Starlings & Mynas	**Sturnidae**		
128	Grey-headed Starling (987-989)	*Sturnus malabaricus* (Gmelin,1789)	BH,DH,PU	R
129	Brahminy Starling (994)	*Sturnus pagodarum* (Gmelin,1789)	Several places	R
130	Asian Pied Starling (1002-1004)	*Sturnus contra* Linnaeus,1758	Several places	R
131	Common Myna (1006-1007)	*Acridotheres tristis* (Linnaeus,1766)	Several places	R
132	Bank Myna (1008)	*Acridotheres ginginianus* (Latham,1790)	PLR,NIL,CH	R
133	Jungle Myna (1009-1011)	*Acridotheres fuscus* (Wagler,1827)	DH	R
	Orioles	**Oriolidae**		
134	Eurasian Golden Oriole (952-953)	*Oriolus oriolus* (Linnaeus,1758)	JO,PU,KLD	R
135	Black –napped Oriole (954,956-957)	*Oriolus chinensis* Linnaeus,1766	JO	R
136	Black-headed Oriole (958-960a)	*Oriolus xanthornus* (Linnaeus,1758)	Several places	R
	Drongos	**Dicruridae**		
137	Black Drongo (962-964)	*Dicrurus macrocercus* (Vieillot,1817)	Several places	R
138	White-bellied Drongo (967-969)	*Dicrurus caerulescens* (Linnaeus,1758)	JO	R
139	Greater Racket-tailed Drongo(976-981)	*Dicrurus paradiseus* (Linnaeus,1766)	JO,PU	R
	Crows, Jays, Treepies, Magpies	**Corvidae**		
140	Indian Treepie (1030a-1034)	*Dendrocitta vagabunda* (Latham,1790)	Several places	R
141	House Crow (1048-1051)	*Corvus splendens* (Vieillot,1817)	Several places	R
142	Jungle Crow (1054-1057)	*Corvus macrorhynchos* (Wagler,1827)	JO,BH	R



Numbers within brackets after the common names are the numbers given to species in **Ali and Ripley** (1987)

NT-Near Threatened (IUCN Red List Category, Birdlife International, 2006); **R**-Resident; **M**-Migrant

Sight records- Kuldiha-**KLD**; Chandipur-**CH**; Panchulingeswar-**PLR**; Jorachua-**JO**; Purnapani-**PU**; Sergarh-**SGH** ; Borogohalo Hill-**BH**; Debagiri Hill-**DH**; Nilgiri-**NIL**

Acknowledgements

We are thankful to DFO. Kuldiha Wildlife Sanctuary for his kind permission to carry out the study. We are also greatly thankful to the officials of all ranks who have helped us to traverse many untraversable terrains and have shared risks and joys with us during this work.

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Avifaunal interaction with plants in Zoological Survey of India campus, Dehradun, Uttarakhand

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Introduction

Observations on interaction between birds and plant species in the Northern Regional Station campus of Zoological Survey of India was carried out from 2007-2009. The campus covers a total area of 48 acres and located adjoining to the New Forest Campus which is an IBA site (IN-UT-09) (Islam and Rahmani 2004). It is located geographically between 30° 20′ 45.38″ N and 78° 00′ 52.90″ E at an altitude of 681 m asl. The campus includes laboratories and residential complex of Botanical Survey of India, Anthropological Survey of India and Zoological Survey of India.

Vegetation

The main vegetation of the campus consist of avenue trees such as *Grevillea robusta, Cinnamomum camphora, Chukrasia tabularis, Albizia procera, Jacaranda mimosaefolia, Chorisia speciosa* etc, trees of arboretum such as *Cordia dichotoma, Erythrina stricta, Albizia procera, Kydia calycina, Terminalia arjuna, Callistemon viminalis* etc and wild trees such as *Broussonetia papyrifera, Morus alba, Melia azedarach, Ficus palmata, Albizia procera, Murraya koenigii.* The dominant shrubs are *Rubus ellipticus, Cascabella thevetia, Lantana camara, Urena lobata,* and *Calliandra haematocephala.*

Methodology

Observations were mainly made in the morning hours between 6:00 to 9:00 A.M. All the accessible routes in the campus and surrounding areas were surveyed for the species documentation. Bird species were recognized using a pair of binoculars with magnification power of 10x30. Standard field guides (Grimmet *et al.,* 2000) was used for identification and confirmation of the bird species.

Results and Discussion

During present study 89 species of birds belonging to 32 families were recorded. Among 89 species, 16 are winter visitors, 7 are summer visitors, and 66 are resident (Table 1). The birds exploit the trees of the campus for feeding, breeding and resting. About 27 species of birds were found to consume fruits or other parts of 17 plant species. The fruits and flowers of mulberry trees such as *Broussonetia papyrifera,* and *Morus alba* were attracted by Red-vented Bulbul, Himalayan Bulbul, Indian Treepie, Grey Treepie, Common Myna, Red-billed Blue Magpie, Common Rosefinch.

The fruits of *Melia azedarach, Ficus palmata, Cinnamomum camphora, Cordia dichotoma* were attracted by passerine birds such as Himalayan Bulbul Red-vented Bulbul, Jungle Crow, Red-billed Blue Magpie, Grey Tree Pie, Indian Treepie, Blue Whistling-Thrush, Oriental White-eye, Yellow-legged Green--Pigeon, Eurasian Golden Oriole and by non-passerine birds such as Plum-headed Parakeet, Rose-ringed Parakeet, Brown-headed Barbet and Coppersmith Barbet.

The fruits of the shrubs such as *Cascabella thevetia, Rubus ellipticus, Lantana camara,* and *Urena lobata* were attracted by Grey Hornbill, Himalayan Bulbul, Red-Vented Bulbul, Oriental White-eye, Grey Bush Chat, Oriental Magpie-Robin and Spotted Munia.

The flowers of *Erythrina stricta, Callistemon viminalis, Calliandra haematocephala* and *Chorisia speciosa* were visited by Purple Sunbird, Crimson Sunbird, Oriental White-eye, Indian Treepie, Brahminy Starling, Black Drongo, Spangled Drongo, Common Myna, Jungle Crow, Himalayan Bulbul, Red-vented Bulbul, Tailor bird, Eurasian Golden Oriole, Plum-headed Parakeet, Rose-ringed Parakeet and Lesser Golden-backed Woodpecker. All these collected nectar regularly throughout entire flowering period.

The birds also use trees for nesting. About 18 species of birds were observed breeding in the campus. The nests of the birds such as White-breasted Waterhen, Common Tailorbird, Purple Sunbird, Spotted Munia, Jungle crow, Common Myna and Shikra were found in the following trees *Diospyros malabarica, Eriobotrys japonica, Citrus grandis, Polyalthia longifolia, Albizia procera* and *Grevillea robusta* respectively for nesting in the campus. Thus it was observed that the diverse tree species of the campus provide suitable habitats for avifaunal activities such as feeding, breeding and resting throughout the year.

Acknowledgement:

The authors are grateful to the Director, Zoological Survey of India for providing facilities and encouragement. Thanks are also due to Dr. Manikandan and Dr. Prasanth Pushalkar, Botanical Survey of India, Dehradun for their assistance in identification of plants.

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Table 1. List of birds recorded in Zoological Survey of India Campus, Dehradun, 2007-2009.

A	B	C	D	E
	Family: Phalacrocoracidae			
1	Little Cormorant	*Phalacrocorax niger*	r	
	Family: Ardeidae			
2	Little Egret	*Egretta garzetta*	r	
3	Cattle Egret	*Bubulcus ibis*	R	
	Family: Accipitridae			
4	Black Kite	*Milvus migrans*	r	
5	Egyptian Vulture	*Neophron percnopterus*	r	
6	Shikra	*Accipiter badius*	R	br
	Family: Phasianidae			
7	Red Junglefowl	*Gallus gallus*	R	
	Family: Rallidae			
8	White-breasted Waterhen	*Amaurornis phoenicurus*	R	br
9	Red-wattled Lapwing,	*Vanellus indicus*	R	br
	Family: Columbidae			
10	Blue Rock Pigeon	*Columba livia*	R	br
11	Eurasian Collared-Dove	*Streptopelia decaocto*	R	
12	Spotted Dove	*Streptopelia chinensis*	R	br
13	Yellow-legged Green-Pigeon	*Treron phoenicoptera*	r	
	Family: Psittacidae			
14	Rose-ringed Parakeet	*Psittacula krameri*	R	
15	Slaty-headed Parakeet	*Psittacula himalayana*	RW	
16	Plum-headed Parakeet	*Psittacula cyanocephala*	RW	
	Family: Cuculidae			
17	Pied Crested Cuckoo	*Clamator jacobinus*	S	
18	Common Hawk Cuckoo	*Hierococcyx varius*	S	
19	Indian Cuckoo	*Cuculus micropterus*	S	
20	Common Cuckoo	*Cuculus canorus*	S	
21	Asian Koel	*Eudynamys scolopacea*	R	
22	Greater Coucal	*Centropus bengalensis*	R	br
	Family: Strigidae			
23	Spotted Owlet	*Athene brama*	R	br
24	Brown Hawk-Owl	*Ninox scutulata*	r	
	Family: Alcedinidae			
25	White-breasted Kingfisher	*Halcyon smyrnensis*	R	
	Family: Meropidae			
26	Small Bee-eater	*Merops orientalis*	r	
	Family: Coraciidae			
27	Indian Roller	*Coracias benghalensis*	r	
	Family: Upupidae			
28	Common Hoopoe	*Upupa epops* Linnaeus	r	
	Family: Bucerotidae			
29	Indian Grey Hornbill	*Ocyceros birostris*	R	
	Family: Capitonidae			
30	Brown-headed Barbet	*Megalaima zeylanica*	R	
31	Coppersmith Barbet	*Megalaima haemacephala*	R	
	Family: Picidae			
32	Fulvous-breasted Pied Woodpecker	*Dendrocopos macei*	r	
33	Lesser Golden-backed Woodpecker	*Dinopium benghalense*	R	
	Family: Hirundinidae			
34	Red-rumped Swallow	*Hirundo daurica*	R	br
35	Wire-tailed Swallow	*Hirundo smithii*	r	
	Family: Motacillidae			
36	White Wagtail	*Motacilla alba*	w	
37	Oriental Tree Pipit	*Anthus hodgsoni*	W	
	Family: Campephagidae			
38	Small Minivet	*Pericrocotus cinnamomeus*	r	
39	Long-tailed Minivet	*Pericrocotus ethologus*	w	
40	Scarlet Minivet	*Pericrocotus flammeus*	w	
	Family: Pycnonotidae			
41	Himalayan Bulbul	*Pycl1onotus leucogenys*	R	br
42	Red-vented Bulbul	*Pycnonotus cafer*	R	br
43	Black Bulbul	*Hypsipetes leucocephalus*	W	
	Family: Laniidae			
44	Rufous-backed Shrike	*Lanius schach*	r	
45	Lesser Grey Shrike	*Lanius minor*	r	
	Family: Muscicapidae			
	Subfamily: Turdinae			
46	Blue Whistling-Thrush	*Myiophonus caeruleus*	W	
47	Oriental Magpie-Robin	*Copsychus saularis*	R	
48	White-capped Redstart	*Chaimarromis leucocephalus*	w	
49	Common Stonechat	*Saxicola torquata*	w	
50	Pied Bushchat	*Saxicola caprata*	R	
51	Grey Bushchat	*Saxicola ferrea*	R	
52	Indian Chat	*Cercomela fusca*	r	
	Subfamily: Timaliinae			
53	Spotted Babbler	*Pellorneum ruficeps*	w	
54	Rusty-cheeked Scimitar-Babbler	*Pomatorhinus erythrogenys*	r	
55	Large Grey Babbler	*Turdoides malcolmi*	R	
56	Yellow-eyed Babbler	*Chrysomma sinense*	r	
57	Jungle Babbler	*Turdoides striatus*	R	br
	Subfamily: Sylviinae			
58	Ashy Prinia	*Prinia socialis*	R	
59	Blyth's Reed-Warbler	*Acrocephalus dumetorum*	P	
60	Common Tailor Bird	*Orthotomus sutorius*	W	br
61	Lemon-rumped Warbler	*Phylloscopus chloronotus*	w	
62	Western Crowned Warbler	*Phylloscopus occipitalis*	s	
63	Grey-headed Flycatcher-Warbler	*Seicercus xanthoschistos*	W	
	Subfamily: Muscicapinae			
64	Grey-headed Flycatcher	*Culicicapa ceylonensis*	W	
	Subfamily: Monarchinae			
65	Asian Paradise-Flycatcher	*Terpsiphone paradisi*	S	
	Subfamily: Rhipidurinae			
66	White-throated Fantail-Flycatcher	*Rhipidura albicollis*	S	

A	B	C	D	E
	Family: Paridae			
67	Great Tit	*Parus major*	RW	
	Family: Nectariniidae			
68	Purple Sunbird	*Nectarinia asiatica*	RS	br
69	Crimson Sunbird	*Aethopyga siparaja*	R	
	Family: Zosteropidae			
70	Oriental White-eye	*Zosterops palpebrosus*	R	
	Family: Fringillidae			
71	Common Rosefinch	*Carpodacus erythrinus*	W	
	Family: Estrildidae			
72	Red Munia	*Amandava amandava*	r	
73	White-rumped Munia	*Lonchura striata*	r	
74	Spotted Munia	*Lonchura punctulata*	R	br
	Family: Ploceidae			
	Subfamily: Passerinae			
75	House Sparrow	*Passer domesticus*	R	br
	Subfamily: Ploceinae			
76	Baya Weaver	*Ploceus philippinus*	R	
	Family: Sturnidae			
77	Brahminy Starling	*Sturnus pagodarum*	R	
78	Asian Pied Starling	*Sturnus contra*	R	br
79	Common Myna	*Acridotheres tristis*	R	br
80	Bank Myna	*Acridotheres ginginianus*	r	
	Family: Oriolidae			
81	Eurasian Golden Oriole	*Oriolus oriolus*	r	
82	Black-headed Oriole	*Oriolus xanthornus*	r	
	Family: Dicruridae			
83	Black Drongo	*Dicrurus macrocercus*	R	
84	Spangled Drongo	*Dicrurus hottentottus*	R	
	Family: Corvidae			
85	Red-billed Blue Magpie	*Urocissa erythrorhyncha*	R	
86	Indian Treepie	*Dendrocitta vagabunda*	R	
87	Grey Treepie	*Dendrocitta formosae*	R	
88	House Crow	*Corvus splendens*	R	br
89	Jungle Crow	*Corvus macrorhynchos*	R	

A = Serial No., B =Common Name, C = Scientific Name, D =Residential Status1, E = Breeding Status2

1Residential Status: R=widespread resident, r=sparse local resident, W=winter visitor, S=summer visitor, RW= Widespread resident and winter visitor, P=passage visitor. **2Breeding Status**: Br=breeding

Birdwatching at the door step

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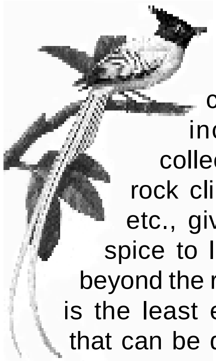

Habits die hard, even hobbies too. Hobbies such as philately, coin collection, antique collection, etc. fetch income besides giving pleasure to the collector. But birdwatching, trekking, touring, rock climbing, photography, parachute jumping, etc., give pleasure of adventure. Hobbies add spice to life. Many are costly to be pursued and beyond the reach of a common man. But birdwatching is the least expensive and most pleasurable hobby that can be developed by all, irrespective of age and economic status. Birdwatching helps us to count the number and species of birds existing in a specific area which reflects the condition and health of the specified habitat.

Birdwatching is economical as it costs very less to an individual. A note book, a pen or pencil and a pair of binoculars are the basic materials required for birdwatching. Besides, one should have the time and patience to see the “winged jewels” of the land, water, forest and the sky. One is really blessed if he or she has sharp eyes and ears.

Many a time a birdwatcher may have to travel over long distances to reach the forests, water bodies, deserts and mountains, etc, as the birds’ habitat differs from place to place. But in case of people living in the undivided South Kanara district, one can watch dozens of birds at the doorstep. My experience of birdwatching does not differ from this.

My house is located in the municipality area of Karkala Town which is surrounded by paddy, areca, and coconut fields. There is also a small patch of forest consisting of shrubs, bushes, and trees. Some of the important trees are *Tectona grandis* (teak), *Strychnos nuxvomica, Minuses elengi, Ficus hispida, Macaranga peltata, Aporusa lindleyana, Anacardium occidentale, Madhuca nerifolia, Mangifera indica, Hopea ponga, Artocarpus heterophyllus, Psidium guajava, Artocarpus incisus, Carica papaya, Caryota urens* and a *Bambosa bambosa* thicket. Each tree plays an important role in the life of birds as they provide food, shelter and other life supporting systems to the birds. Besides, there is also a sacred grove consisting of diversified trees. However, the bamboo grove in front of my house provided a wonderful ecosystem for many of the birds. The bamboos provide safety for the small birds where they build the nests, lay and hatch the eggs and protect the young ones from predators. The bamboo branches provide a gymnastic playground for the young ones. The fallen leaves form a bed inside the grove and keep the atmosphere cool. Birds are protected from hot sun rays and blowing wind from outside. All these varieties of trees and bamboos are found in an area of two acres around my house. These factors are contributory to the birdwatching at my door step.

I am usually awakened by the whistling call of the Racket-tailed Drongo from the top of the tree of the sacred grove - *Nagabana* or sometimes by the call of the Malabar whistling thrush. The Malabar Whistling Thrush is a very shy bird and has beautiful dark blue shining plumage. As the day breaks, the thrush starts turning the fallen leaves in search of worms for its breakfast.

A batch of crows disturb my sweet sleep and wakes me up to provide them with bread crumbs or cooked rice. It has been my pleasure to feed them for the past many years. Another batch of birds called as Babblers or Seven-sisters hop around the compound walls, feeding the young ones. They always rest on the bamboo branches. Twice or thrice the young ones are predated by the cats of the neighbouring houses. The Koel which utters "Kuhoo ... Kuhooo ....." keeps feeding on the yellow fruits of *Ficus hispida.*

Sunbirds of different colours come in the morning to collect nectar from the Hibiscus flowers almost everyday. They build their nests with the help of waste cotton thread and cobwebs at the comer of the house. I have seen another small bird called as the tailor bird building its nest by stitching the leaves together. The nests are small but strong enough to hold the bird and its eggs. The male and the female live around the nest jumping, chirping, and wagging the tail up and down. Once I saw a pair of partridge size birds with yellow coloured legs flying near the open field attached to my house. The "tittio". . . "tittio" ... was almost heard every now and then for more than a week. They flew very often from a point on the ground for few days and later on inspection of the spot, I saw their simple nest built on the ground with small sticks and a few stones around. A pair of coloured eggs was there on the ground fully camouflaged. After a few days I saw the chicks moving along with the parents and one day they flew. But still the 'tittio' sound is lingering in my ears. They were identified as Red-wattled lapwings. I remember seeing a pair of Grey Partridges walking quickly under the cover of bushes near the bamboo grove. Partridges are small birds of the size of a small chicken with short legs and a round body. They are always hunted by the tribals, for food as well as their coloured feathers used for decorating the turbans of the *Narasannas.* I have also heard the calls of jungle fowls from a distance either in the morning or in the late evening.

Rarely, I have seen the flight of a lone Emerald dove and the movement of Green pigeons in group flying quickly above the house as if they have no time to look at others. The Rose-ringed Parakeets take rest either on the top of the bamboo branches or on the coconut tree tops. The zigzag flight of them with a sharp cry always attract my attention. The Coucals are commonly found on the ground moving slowly collecting worms. They are not beautiful to look at. Occasionally, I used to see Hoopoes moving on the ground just before the sunset. They are beautiful as they are crowned with a crest on their head.

One day a batch of small black birds attracted my attention as they pulled dry grass from the ground and flew off to the areca inflorescence where they built their nest. They could easily be identified as Black headed Muniyas which had been seen earlier near the *Rama Samudrum* Lake.

The Green bee-eaters, both large and small ones with beautiful colours are always seen sitting either on the cables or on the cashew tree branches to catch bees. They usually catch bees either in the morning or in the evening. Whenever they find a flying insect; they take off and catch them with a "click" sound. It is a fun to watch them catching the flying insects and eating them.

Generally the birds hunt together by flying from branch to branch or from tree to tree. The hunting team consists of Barbets, Black-headed Orioles, Ioras, Golden Orioles, Coppersmiths, and Treepies etc. The Golden Oriole is an attractive glowing yellow coloured bird with black wings. The treepies with a long tail hang on coconut leaves and converse with each other with a loud voice.

Many a time, I saw a pair of Common Mynas dancing and hopping slowly on the compound wall or on the ground. To my surprise, I saw the mynas nesting on the hole on the trunk of an areca tree. The young one was trying to peep out of the nest whenever the mother came with food in its beak. Once as I was reading a Newspaper near the window, I saw an ash color bird sitting on the branch of Hopea ponga tree, barely 10 feet away. It was almost the size of a treepie but with a small tail. As soon as the bird saw me it flew off without making a sound. It was later identified as a Grey Shrike.

Whenever I gaze up during the day time, I see many Brahminy and Pariah kites circling, up in the sky. Recently, a Brahminy kite built its nest at the top of the coconut tree and no other bird dared to approach the tree other than the crows. In the evenings, flocks of water birds consisting of Egrets, Teals and Little Cormorants fly in sorties above the house in a particular direction. During hot sun, I could hear the '*tuck tuck'* sound of the coppersmith from the top of the mango tree. The other day, a pair of woodpeckers was seen pecking the dry bark of a cashew tree for worms. As soon as they caught sight of me, they flew away.

One morning, at around 8.00 o'clock, I heard a loud cacophony of a dozen odd crows sitting on the compound wall, around a tall bird, with ballooning brown feathers. The bird had red round eyes and a small beak in between. I quickly realized that it was a frightened owl. Owls are rarely seen during the day time. According to some, sighting an owl is a bad omen. But I was happy to see it and identify it as a fish eating owl which lives near the river side trees. It might have been singled out on one of the trees in the sacred grove by the crows and chased towards our compound. Thanks to the crows for showing me a new species.

The spotted doves sit on the bamboo branches and make "kuroo.. kuroo..." calls. I am unable to make the difference between Falcon and Kestrel which visit our area during calm and quiet evenings. In my neighbor's compound, I saw an Indian Pitta, limping as it had a broken leg. Pittas are frequent visitors to our garden.

Of all the birds, the most vociferous bird is the large Kingfisher which builds its nest by digging holes on the wall of our drinking water well. Many a time the chicks fall into the water and drown. I hardly go near the well and peep into it very often. By the time I notice, half the body is decomposed and the water gets sullied. I really pity this beautiful bird which is often loosing its fledglings in this manner.

I was a member of Sri Bhuvanendra Nature Club and at that time, I used to accompany the birdwatching troupe very often. Once, we went to Agumbe forest which lies on the Western Ghats. I had the golden opportunity of seeing the most beautiful and prestigious bird, the Paradise Flycatcher from a close distance. As a birdwatcher, I can never forget this bird as it has occupied the front cover of Dr. Salim Ali's magnum opus "*The Book of Indian Birds".* In the world of birds, the male is always beautiful and it is true in case of the Paradise Flycatcher. It reminds me of a Christian bride adorned with a long white dress. The female is saffron coloured. A pair of flycatchers always visited the bamboo groves near my house. I had the privilege of showing them to my family members who also shared my jubilation on sighting the pair.

I am very much pained to say that the adjacent land has been bulldozed recently and the ecosystem is completely destroyed. Trees, bushes and the bamboo groves have been removed using a JCB. I was observing the leveling activities which went on for almost a month. On a particular day, in front of my house the bamboo grove which had given the shelter to many birds was being pulled down. I was watching the pulling down operations of the bamboo grove with much grief. Suddenly, a Paradise Flycatcher came from nowhere and sat on one of the fallen bamboo braches. The bird was surveying the whole situation with anguish and it seemed as if the bird was very much agitated at the sudden disappearance of its chosen habitat. After a while, I saw the bird flying off to the nearby tree in the next compound and uttering a loud helpless cry. In the beginning, when we learnt that the grove was slated for removal, we thought that it was a good idea because the grove was blocking our view. But as soon as it was removed, we felt very sad over this insensitive act. On the next day morning, the Magpie Robin sat on the stone pole facing the ground, and was crying continuously. But there was no one to listen to the cries of the Magpie Robin. The soliloquy of the robin went on and on, but all in vain.

You too can watch a variety of birds living around your locality provided you have a taste for watching them. Birds live in the midst of nature. Hence, grow trees which welcome the birds to live in. Protect and preserve nature.

CORRESPONDENCE

RECENT RECORDS OF MASKED BOOBY (Sula dactylatra) ALONG THE WESTERN COAST OF INDIA

by *RAJU KASAMBE, Bombay Natural History Society, Shaheed Bhagat Singh Road, Mumbai-400001, Maharashtra*

I found some important records of the stray sightings of Masked Boobies (*Sula dactylatra*) along the western coast posted on the internet. Here, I have tried to put these records together from the internet birding groups. Most of these records are from peer birders and some were with photographs attached to them and hence are reliable. As these records are important as far as the distribution of the species is concerned, I am presenting those compiled records here.

Masked Booby at Mumbai, Maharashtra:

Mr. Pankaj Jadhav found a Masked Booby (*Sula dactylatra*) at the famous Juhu beach in Mumbai on 20th June 2010. The bird was not injured but couldn't fly and was being mobbed by crows. He took the bird to Veterinary College, Parel for treatment. But, when he went there to enquire about its recuperation, he was told that the bird had died two days after admission.

When he told Mr. Saurabh Sawant about it and sent him some pictures, the bird was confirmed as a Masked Booby. However, the exact reason of its death could not be ascertained (as posted on birdsofbombay@yahoogroups.com on 25th June, 2010by Saurabh Sawant).

Masked Booby at Malvan, Maharashtra:

On 4th July 2010, I saw news on a Marathi TV channel that one Masked Booby has reached the coastal village, Malvan in Sindhudurg district of Maharashtra. They showed the footage of the bird being treated by veterinarians and as per the channel's report the bird was supposed to be released after it could fly (as posted on maharashtrapakshimitra@yahoogroups.com on 5th July 2010, by Raju Kasambe).

Reports of Masked Booby from Kerala:

An injured juvenile Masked Booby was found at the Asramam, Kollam, in Kerala on 20th June 2010. Masked Boobies reach Kerala coast occasionally during monsoon season. Then the bird was at sent to Thiruvananthapuram Zoo. (As posted by C. Susanth on keralabirder@yahoogroups.com on July 1st 2010)

A Masked Booby was reported from Chavakkad beach in Thrissur district of Kerala on 6th February 2008 by Mr. P. P. Sreenivasan. The earlier report of a Masked Booby sighting was during July 1992. It is interesting to note that all the earlier reports of Masked Booby from Kerala coast coincided with the arrival of South-Western Monsoon.

Here is a brief summary of earlier reports of Masked Booby from Kerala: 1. Kadalundi, Malappuram in July 1987 and in September 2002. 2. Chaliyam, Kozhikode in August 1988.

3. Udma and Thaikadppuram, in Kasaragod district in August 1994 and July 1998. 4. Mattul beach, in Kannur district in July 2004. 5. Thaikadappuram at Kannur in August 2006. (As posted by Mr. Ommer Nameer on keralabirder@yahoogroups.com on 7th February, 2008)

Munjpara *et al.* (2008) had reported a Masked Booby at the coast in Kachchh in Gujrath.

Earlier Andheria (2001) and Kinnear (1912) had reported it from the Mumbai shores.

Wait (1933) had reported them at sea 350 miles from Mumbai. Kurup (1990) had reported it from the coasts of Kerala and Madhyastha (1987) reported it from coastal Karnataka.

Tiwari (2009) reported it from the Pingleshwar coast, Kachchh. According to Rasmussen (2005) it is a casual offshore visitor from Mekran coast (SW Pakistan) to Sri Lanka. It is vagrant and once was reported inland (at Nashik, Maharashtra).

Thus, there are few records of the species from the western coast of India. Presumably, pelagic birds stray towards the shores of Mumbai and as far as Kachchh due to strong monsoon winds during the months of July to September and are often mobbed by crows to exhaustion leading to death.

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SPARROWS AT BANGALORE INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT

by S. DEVASAHAYAM, "AKSHAYA", Maloorkunnu Cross Road, Marikunnu P. O., Calicut-673 012, Kerala.

With numerous articles in various print media focusing on the decline of sparrows (*Passer domesticus*) and the probable reasons for the same fresh in my mind, I was pleasantly surprised to hear the familiar chirping of sparrows echoing in the departure lounge of the new Bangalore International Airport on 18 May 2010. Obviously the sparrows were very much at home in their new surroundings since some were picking up crumbs from the floor near the food counters while others were busy with their courtship movements on the floor and were hopping and quivering their wings. A few were even carrying nesting materials high up on the corners of the roof of the airport. The nesting materials were ingeniously out-sourced from within the airport itself by shredding the tender leaves and stems of rattans (*Calamus* spp.?) that were grown as indoor plants. New buildings especially those in which aluminum, steel and glass are predominantly used are often cited as one of the main reasons for the decline of sparrows in the urban environment as they provide little opportunity for sparrows to nest and find adequate food. I wonder whether the sparrows were able to successfully raise their brood in this new swanky environment.

SIGHTING OF NESTING OF BLACK BAZA (Aviceda leuphotes) IN TINSUKIA DISTRICT OF UPPER ASSAM.

by MD. IMRAN, C/o. Eden Shoe, Station Road, Tinsukia, Assam, India.

I received the information about the nesting of Black Baza (*Aviceda leuphotes*) from Prahlad Kakati, a keen birder, conservationist and science teacher by profession. I rushed to the nesting place to take a look at the raptors that had bred two chicks successfully near Rupai of upper Assam. But unfortunately due to the gusty winds on the stormy night of 25th of July 2010, the nest had fallen on the ground. But luckily the chicks were mature enough to survive the stormy night and gave the impression that they were quite healthy.
So when we reached the place we were fortunate enough to see both the male and female raptors which were calling frequently. We even saw a parent bird carrying a prey to its chicks. Prahlad informed me about the chicks which he had observed at least for a week before the nest fell to the ground. Though we could not find the chicks nearby on that day we were quite sure of their presence, because of the food carried by one of the parents and the frequent alarm call given to them by the parent birds. We were there for two hours and we could never locate the chicks and ultimately we left the place without disturbing them. It was really a nice birding day we had on that day.

Regarding the status of this raptor in this region I had gone through many guide books. This is a very rare raptor in this region and according to Pamela C. Rasmussen's guide book, Birds of South Asia the Ripley Guide; this is a breeding visitor to this region along with two-way migration. Though the nesting of this bird has been reported from Panbari near Kaziranga, this is the first nesting record of Black Baza from upper Assam.

It is also important to note that a pair of Shikra (*Accipiter badius*) also made their nest nearby and they had successfully bred two chicks.

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Cover Photographs

Avifauna of Kuldiha Wildlife Sanctuary, Orissa, India, by Sunit K. Das, Nibedita Dash, R.A. Ahmed and S.D. Rout, (page 49 to 55)

1) Black Redstart *(Phoenicurus ochruros)*
2) Black-headed Oriole *(Oriolus Xanthornus)*
3) Eurasian Collared-dove *(Streptopelia Decaocto)*
4) Large-tailed Nightjar *(Caprimulgus Macrurus)*
5) Rose-ringed Parakeet *(Psittacula Krameri)*
6) Crested Serpent Eagle *(Spilornis Cheela)*
7) White Wagtail *(Motacilla Alba) (back cover)*
8) Grey-headed Starling *(Sturnus Malabaricus) (back cover)*
9) Masked Booby *(Sula dactylatra)* found along the Western coast of India by Raju Kasambe (page 59)
10) & 11) Black Baza *(Aviceda Leuphotes)* in Tinsukia district of upper Assam by MD. Imran, (page 60)

ETYMOLOGY OF FLORICAN HILL, CALICUT (KERALA)

by ANITA DEVASAHAYAM and S. DEVASAHAYAM, AKSHAYA, Maloorkunnu Cross Road, Marikunnu P.O., Calicut-673 012, Kerala.

Ever since we moved to Calicut in early 1980's we were curious about the origin of the name 'Florican Hill' near Malaparamba in Calicut. Recently in a blog on Calicut (http://calicutheritage.blogspot.com/ accessed on 10 January 2010) under the title 'The land of many hills' the author mentions "Calicut has a large number of places with 'hill' suffixed - the most obvious are West Hill, East Hill, Silver Hills and Florican Hills (Florican, incidentally is a bird of the bustard family which is virtually extinct now in Calicut)".

The blog made us to search for an authentic record of occurrence of the bird in Calicut. Salim Ali's Birds of Kerala (Ali 1969) mentions that the Lesser Florican *(Sypheotides indica)* is an exceptional straggler and the only record of the species in Kerala is of a specimen shot in 1876 near Trivandrum. Krishnan (1990) later reported the stray occurrence of a single bird at Karunagapally (Kollam District) in 1989. However, earlier records indicate that the Lesser Florican could have existed at Calicut. Jerdon (1864) mentioned that the 'leek or lesser florikin' is found throughout India, from near the foot of the Himalayas to the southern most districts… few occur in Malabar, but in Southern Canara (present Dakshina Kannada in Karnataka) there is at least one locality where they may be found in the cold weather. Jerdon was also posted as a Civil Surgeon at Tellicherry between 1847 and 1851 (Wikipedia 2010). The Malabar Manual (Logan 1887) includes the Lesser Florican in the checklist of birds of Malabar (the present northern half of Kerala and the southern coastal region of Karnataka). Incidentally the name 'Florican Hill' also finds a place in Logan's Malabar Manual while describing the boundaries of Calicut Taluk. Before his appointment as Collector of Malabar, Logan had served as a Magistrate and Judge for about 20 years in the region (Wikipedia 2010).

The bird was probably common in the hillock where Providence Women's College is now situated in Malaparamba which was aptly named as 'Florican Hill' by the British who administered the Malabar District from about 1790's till independence. Thus, though there is no specific documentation of the Lesser Florican in Calicut, indirect evidences appear to be available for the occurrence of the species in the region, in the past.

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ROLLING AND OTHER INTERESTING BEHAVIOR OF LARGE GREY BABBLERS (Turdoides malcolmi)

by A. M. K. BHAROS, B-101, Gayatrinagar, PO; Shankernagar, Raipur. CG. 492007.

The Large Babblers are known to indulge in the act of side wards leapfrogging. This was recorded by me (*JBNHS* 93, *P-93)* and also subsequently in September in the same year. More interesting behavioral acts as observed in Sidhi Distt (22:475 & 24:42 N, 81:184 & 82:483 E) of Madhya Pradesh are narrated below;

Pretension

Mating was observed between the months February and September. In September a flock of 8 birds was observed feeding on ground. Amongst them a young bird displayed its developing wings raised *kay kay* calls repeatedly, and later kept its mouth wide open, pretending to demand food. Another bird which was nearby was attracted by this behaviour and moved towards the calling bird. No sooner the bird came close; the young bird suddenly mounted and copulated for 3/4 seconds. Was this a mode of display to attract the mate, pretending to be a chick?

Rolling act

In the month of June a flock of 12 birds was seen foraging, soon two birds indulged in combat of some sort, holding each other by their toes. In this manner they formed a ball and rolled on ground for about two meters. In yet other occasion two birds formed a ball joined by three more, so a large compact sort of ball of five birds was formed and they rolled in this manner for about a meter. This behavior was amusing and can it be termed a a combat or an act of playfulness? In both the instances all the birds kept calling harshly and simultaneously.

Both the above acts were found to be unreported and hence highlighted in this note.

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